

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-10

NSAE-00 PA-02 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 ERDA-07 H-02 IO-13 OIC-02 OMB-01 SAM-01 NSC-05

NRC-07 OES-06 NASA-02 /119 W
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R 041400Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5703

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

DIA WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

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MILITARY ADDEES ALSO FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MNUC, MPOL, NATO, US, FR

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR WEAPONS EMPLOYMENT POLICIES: FRENCH
PRESS COMMENTS

1. SUMMARY: AN ARTICLE IN FORTHCOMING ISSUE OF DEFENSE
NATIONALE REVIEWS STUDY BY LOS ALAMOS SCIENTIFIC
LABORATORIES WHICH ALLEGEDLY DEBUNKS GRADUATED RESPONSE
AND ARGUES FOR A FORWARD AND QUASI-IMMEDIATE TACTICAL
NUCLEAR DEFENSE. ACTION REQUESTED: COPY OF LOS ALAMOS
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STUDY. END SUMMARY.

2. ON SEPTEMBER 30 AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE (AFP) MOVED A STORY CONCERNING AN ARTICLE ON THE "NEW FORWARD STRATEGY" WHICH WILL APPEAR IN THE OCTOBER EDITION OF THE PRESTIGIOUS FRENCH MONTHLY "DEFENSE NATIONALE." THE ARTICLE, BY COLONEL MARC GENESTE, REPORTEDLY REVIEWS A STUDY BY A TEAM AT LOS ALAMOS SCIENTIFIC LABORATORIES (LASL) WHICH ARGUES AGAINST GRADUATED RESPONSE AND FOR A NEW FORWARD STRATEGY FOR EMPLOYMENT OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

3. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AFP PIECE FOLLOW (INFORMAL TRANSLATION):

"THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN STRATEGY OF GRADUATED RESPONSE SHOULD BE ABANDONED AS DANGEROUS AND OUTDATED. IT SHOULD BE REPLACED BY A NEW FORWARD STRATEGY BASED ON THE QUASI-IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

"THIS CONCLUSION . . . BY A TEAM OF SPECIALISTS AT LASL . . . IS ANALYZED IN DETAIL IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF DEFENSE NATIONALE.

"AT THE OUTSET (THE AUTHOR) UNDERLINES 'THAT THERE WOULD BE NO QUESTION THAT THE FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCES PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A FORWARD STRATEGY, OF WHICH THE INTEGRATED CHARACTER IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE INDEPENDENCE OF ESTIMATE AND DECISION WHICH FRANCE INTENDS TO RESERVE FOR HERSELF WITH REGARD TO ANY CONFLICT, WITHIN OR OUTSIDE OF EUROPE.'

"BUT . . . ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF FRANCE FROM NATO (SIC) WAS PRECISELY THE ADOPTION, BY THAT ORGANIZATION, OF THE AMERICAN DOCTRINE OF GRADUATED RESPONSE . . .

"THAT STRATEGY HAS JUST BEEN CONDEMNED BY THE LOS ALAMOS SCIENTISTS FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS: IT IS ILLUSORY BECAUSE IT INCITES THE ADVERSARY TO A PREVENTIVE (PRE-EMPTIVE?) NUCLEAR ATTACK, DESTROYING SIMULTANEOUSLY THE NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL FORCES OF NATO. (GRADUATED UNCLASSIFIED

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RESPONSE) IMPOSES A CONSIDERABLE ECONOMIC BURDEN AS A RESULT OF THE SUPPORT REQUIRED FOR THE CONVENTIONAL FORCES . . . IF A WAR BEGINS WITH A CONVENTIONAL PERIOD, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY INITIALLY TO CEDE TERRITORY WHILE WAITING FOR REINFORCEMENTS, RESULTING IN SUCCESSIVE BATTLES AND DESTRUCTION IN THE FRG SURPASSING THAT OF WORLD WAR II.

"NATO FORCES ARE NEITHER EQUIPPED NOR TRAINED TO INSURE A SIMULTANEOUS CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR DEFENSE. THE MOST CREDIBLE THREAT TO NATO BEING A NUCLEAR OFFENSIVE, IT IS NECESSARY TO TRANSFORM THE ALLIED FORCE STRUCTURE TO OBTAIN A BETTER COUNTER TO THAT THREAT.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5704
INFO USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USCINCEUR
USNMR SHAPE
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG
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"THE BEST COUNTER, ACCORDING TO THE LASL STUDY, IS TO
SUBSTITUTE BATTLEFIELD TACTICAL NUCLEAR FIRE FOR THE BIG

CONVENTIONAL BATTALIONS AND TO REINFORCE THE AIR DEFENSE. THE FIRST RESULT OF THE NEW STRATEGY WOULD BE TO PREVENT WARSAW PACT FORCES FROM CONCENTRATING IN FRONT OF NATO POSITIONS ALONG THE GERMAN BORDER. THE SECOND WOULD BE TO REMOVE THE TEMPTATION TO USE HIGH YIELD NUCLEAR WEAPONS AGAINST THE CITIES AND MILITARY INSTALLATIONS OF NATO.

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"THE AMERICAN STUDY MINUTELY DESCRIBES MININUKES AND LIGHT CONVENTIONAL UNITS EQUIPPED WITH PRECISION GUIDED MUNITIONS (PGM'S) TO REPLACE THE CURRENT FORCE STRUCTURE. THE ANNUAL SUPPORT OF THE NEW FORCES WOULD COST AROUND 8 BILLION DOLLARS FOR THE CENTRAL FRONT, ABOUT HALF OF THE CURRENT COST . . . TAKING INTO ACCOUNT TROOP REDUCTIONS AND THE SCRAPPING OF NUMEROUS TACTICAL AIRCRAFT AND OTHER CONVENTIONAL ARMAMENTS REPLACED BY TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

". . . THE FORWARD STRATEGY IS PRECONDITIONED ON A DEFENSE AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THE EASTERN FRG BORDER. FRENCH SPECIALISTS BELIEVE THE NEW STRATEGY . . . IS A SHATTERING REVISION OF THE CURRENT DOCTRINES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND ARMAMENTS. IT WOULD OBLIGE THE U.S. TO AGREE TO REACT IMMEDIATELY BY THE EMPLOYMENT OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS (AT THE RISK OF ESCALATION TO STRATEGIC WEAPONS AND OF STRIKES ON U.S. TERRITORY) IN THE CASE OF AGGRESSION, EVEN CONVENTIONAL . . ."

4. IN THE OCTOBER 1 FIGARO DEFENSE CORRESPONDENT JEROME DUMOULIN ADDRESSES THE SAME ARTICLE IN DEFENSE NATIONALE. DUMOULIN COMMENTS THAT FOR NUCLEAR STRATEGISTS THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT. THE FIRST HOLDS THAT NUCLEAR RELEASE WILL ALWAYS BE PRECEDED BY A CONVENTIONAL BATTLE. DUMOULIN STATES THAT GENERAL MERY, CHIEF OF THE FRENCH ARMED FORCES, IS INCLINED IN FAVOR OF THIS THESIS. THE SECOND SCHOOL SEEKS AT ANY PRICE TO AVOID THE CONVENTIONAL BATTLE, WHICH IS LOST IN ADVANCE, AND TO USE SIMULTANEOUSLY NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS ON THE BATTLEFIELD, DUMOULIN OPINES THAT GENERAL DE GAULLE WAS A PARTISAN OF SUCH A RESPONSE. DUMOULIN ADDS THAT COLONEL GENESTE, THE AUTHOR OF THE DEFENSE NATIONALE ARTICLE, IS ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT THEORETICIANS OF THE SECOND SCHOOL.

5. AFTER SUMMARIZING BRIEFLY ALONG THE LINES OF THE AFP ITEM, DUMOULIN NOTES THAT THE ADVENT OF PGM'S HAS ALSO SERVED THE SUPPORTERS OF GRADUATED RESPONSE, ACCORDING TO WHOM THE EFFICIENCY OF PGM'S RENEWS THE CREDIBILITY OF

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CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE AND LEGITIMATELY RAISES THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD EVEN HIGHER. DUMOULIN CONCLUDES THAT BY REVERSING THAT PROPOSITION, THE LOS ALAMOS PROJECT REOPENS THE DEBATE ON TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND CONSEQUENTLY THE DEBATE ON PLUTON OR ITS SUCCESSOR.

6. COMMENT: COLONEL GENESTE HAS ARTICULATED HIS OWN THEORIES IN AN ARTICLE IN THE SUMMER 1975 ISSUE OF ORBIS. THE EMBASSY HAS NOT YET RECEIVED ITS COPY OF THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF DEFENSE NATIONALE. WHEN WE DO, WE WILL AMPLIFY ON THIS MESSAGE SHOULD THE GENESTE ARTICLE ON THE LOS ALAMOS STUDY SO WARRANTS.

7. AS A RESULT OF ARTICLES HERE, EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED TWO INFORMAL QUERIES (WASHINGTON POST AND TIMES OF LONDON CORRESPONDENTS) AS TO WHETHER USG HAS OFFICIALLY ADOPTED THE "FORWARD STRATEGY" AND ABANDONED GRADUATED RESPONSE. EMBASSY HAS RESPONDED IN NEGATIVE AND REFERRED CORRESPONDENTS TO DOD POSTURE STATEMENTS FOR REVIEW OF NUCLEAR STRATEGIES.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE DEPARTMENT FORWARD TO THE EMBASSY THE TEXT OF THE LOS ALAMOS STUDY, IF IT IS AVAILABLE.
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Message Attributes

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